

REMARKS

I. Introduction

The Office Action of June 25, 2009 has been reviewed and the Examiner's comments carefully considered. The present Amendment amends claims 16 and 28 in accordance with the originally-filed specification. No new matter has been added. In addition, the present Amendment cancels claim 18. Accordingly, claims 16, 17, and 19-30 are currently pending in the above-referenced application, and claim 16 is in independent form.

II. Interview of October 19, 2009

The Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the courtesies extended to the Applicant's representative during the telephonic interview of October 19, 2009. During the interview, the various objections and rejections set forth in the Office Action of June 25, 2009 were discussed. The Examiner indicated that the amendment to claim 16 as set forth hereinabove would overcome rejections set forth in the Office Action and most likely place the application in condition for allowance. Upon receipt of this Amendment, should the Examiner have any questions, or wish to discuss the application in further detail, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative by telephone at 412-471-8815.

III. Drawing Objection

The Examiner has objected to the drawings under 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a), contending that they fail to show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. More specifically, the Examiner contends that the manner in which the reference means are configured to co-act with the at least two engaging elements is not shown in the figures. The Applicant believes that the above amendments to the claims overcome the Examiner's drawing objection and that every feature of the invention specified in the claims is now shown in the claims. In addition, the manner in which the reference pins (7, 8) (*i.e.*, the reference means) co-act with the wheel carriers (9, 10) of the transporting wheels (4,5) (*i.e.*, the engaging elements) is clearly shown in FIGS. 1 and 2. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this drawing objection are respectfully requested.

IV. 35 U.S.C. §112, First Paragraph Rejections

Claims 16-30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. The Examiner contends that the claims contain subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. Specifically, the Examiner contends that the manner in which at least two engaging elements co-act with the reference means is not sufficiently described in the specification of the above-referenced application. The Applicant believes that the above amendments to claim 16 overcome the Examiner's rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

V. 35 U.S.C. §103 Rejections

Claims 16-30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) for obviousness based upon United States Patent No. 6,984,974 to Liken et al. (hereinafter "the Liken patent"). In view of the following remarks, the Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this rejection.

As defined by amended independent claim 16, the present invention is directed to an apparatus for processing electronic components mounted on a carrier. The apparatus includes at least two engaging elements having a distance therebetween that is adjustable depending on the dimensions of the carrier. The at least two engaging elements engage the carrier and transport the carrier to an interchangeable processing element for processing the electronic components mounted on the carrier. The apparatus also includes reference means provided on the interchangeable processing element and support structures for supporting the at least two engaging elements. The support structures are configured to be urged counter to a bias into a position that corresponds to the interchangeable processing element. The engaging elements are provided with at least one reference position that co-acts with the reference means to define a relative orientation.

The Liken patent is directed to a carrier (10) for carrying a plurality of circuit boards having different dimensions. The carrier (10) includes a base frame with a plurality of

first card guides disposed on its upper surface, a plurality of second card guides disposed on its upper surface, and a plurality of adjustment members. The adjustment members are provided for individually adjusting a distance between a respective pair of one first card guide and one second card guide (*see* FIG. 1).

Initially, the Applicant would like to note that the Liken patent is not directed to an apparatus for processing electronic components as required by independent claim 16. Instead, the Liken patent is directed to a device for carrying circuit boards having different dimensions. Accordingly, the Liken patent fails to teach or suggest an interchangeable processing element for processing the electronic components mounted on the carrier or reference means provided on the interchangeable processing element as required by amended independent claim 16 because the Liken patent is not directed to an apparatus for processing electronic components.

To establish *prima facie* obviousness of a claimed invention, all of the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art. Where claimed limitations are simply not present in the prior art, a *prima facie* obviousness rejection is not supported. Since the Liken patent fails to teach or suggest an interchangeable processing element for processing the electronic components mounted on the carrier or reference means provided on the interchangeable processing element as required by amended independent claim 16, a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been established.

For the foregoing reasons, the Applicant believes that the subject matter of independent claim 16 is neither anticipated by nor obvious over the Liken patent. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 16 are respectfully requested.

Claims 17 and 19-30 depend from and add further limitations to amended independent claim 16 or a subsequent dependent claim and are believed to be patentable for at least the reasons discussed hereinabove in connection with amended independent claim 16. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 17 and 19-30 are respectfully requested.

Application No. 10/579,839
Paper Dated: October 26, 2009
In Reply to USPTO Correspondence of June 25, 2009
Attorney Docket No. 3135-061455

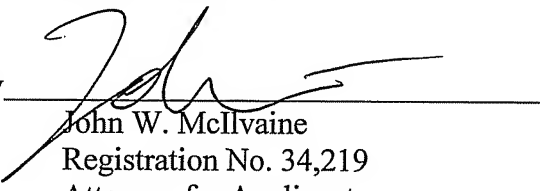
VI. Conclusion

Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the rejections and allowance of pending claims 16, 17, and 19-30 are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

THE WEBB LAW FIRM

By


John W. McIlvaine

Registration No. 34,219

Attorney for Applicant

436 Seventh Avenue

700 Koppers Building

Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Telephone: (412) 471-8815

Facsimile: (412) 471-4094

E-mail: webblaw@webblaw.com